

Mining in Utah

By PATRICK CHRISTIAN

In 1976 the annual value of Utah's mineral production surpassed the \$9 billion mark for the first time in the state's mining history.

Before 1860 the annual value of mineral production was estimated at less than \$10,000, according to Provo resident Dr. Elroy Nelson.

Dr. Nelson, who is an economist for the First Security Corp. and a former director of the Bureau of Economic and Business Research at the University of Utah, reported the mining industry for the past 100 years has been a major foundation on which the economy of the state has been built.

Throughout most of the state and territorial history since 1863, Utah has ranked among the top five states in percentage of the state's employment or income derived from mining and processing of minerals, Dr. Nelson said.

In the total value of all mineral production, Utah usually ranks from 12th to 14th among the 50 states, he added. In variety and balance of the amount of metals, fuels and other non-metallics, the state ranks at or near the

top, he said.

No Trend Reported

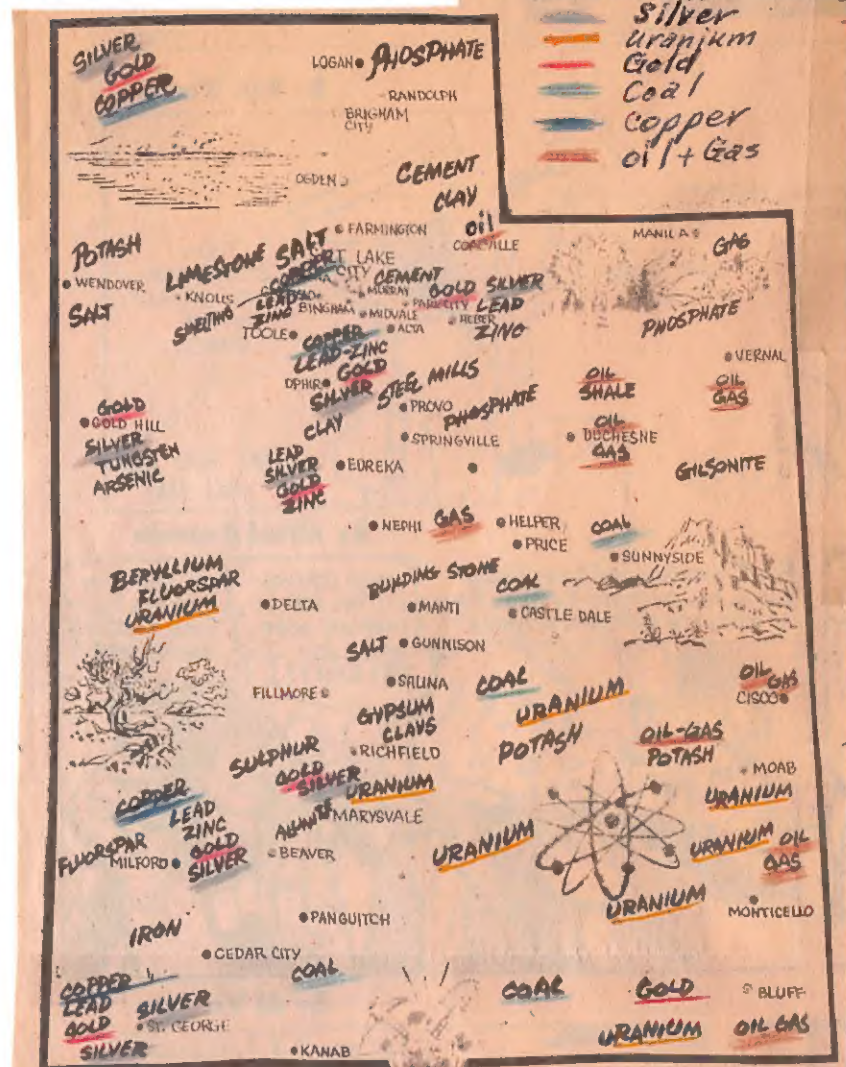
The economist emphasized that there is no continuous year-to-year trend in either mineral discovery or production. Instead there have been several different periods of discovery and emphasis on production, throughout Utah's mining history.

There are four major periods of mineral development, according to Dr. Nelson. These include:

From 1847-1869 was the period when materials such as clay, lime and stone, and salt were produced; after 1863, gold and silver were mined. During this period there was a small amount of iron ore and lead minerals produced. The major beginning of the iron and lead period followed discoveries in 1863.

The year 1869-1904 was the age of the railroad and the laying of extension lines into productive mineral areas. This is when major production began. The metals mined included gold, silver, lead, copper and zinc, along with the other minerals, coal, clays, salt and Gilsomite.

Copper Became Important
During 1905-1940 copper, including



THIS MAP SHOWS the various types of minerals that are found in Utah. The state usually ranks near the top in the variety and balance of various minerals produced in

comparison with other states in the nation. Before 1860 the annual value of minerals was estimated at less than \$10,000. Last year the state surpassed the \$9 billion mark.